

## Defining Genre

**genre:** (n) in film, a genre is a specific category or way of classifying films which have a similar conventions, a similar artistic style, narrative form, and/or thematic content.

- **artistic style:** the distinctive or characteristic way in which the film looks and sounds—its editing style, its lighting and shot composition, the types of scenery, costumes, or props that are used, the overall way that the film looks or feels.

Example: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- **narrative form:** (the word ‘narrative’ means ‘story’), this refers to the basic plot of the film, the main pattern of events that occur in the story, it can also refer to the types of characters that appear in the film.

Example: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- **thematic content:** (the word ‘thematic’ stems from the word ‘theme’), the central issues, problems, or questions that are addressed in the film, the overall message being expressed or conveyed.

Example: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Let’s look at genres of music, to get a better idea...

**artistic style (in music):** different genres of music use specific instruments to create a certain sound or tone, you can just hear the music and tell what genre it falls under.

**form (in music):** the basic pattern of the melody, the way the songs is arranged. There are two basic forms in European/American music: two-part (AB) and three-part (ABA). These letters simply indicate the different parts of the melody: you write down a new letter when the melody changes, and write down the original letter when the melody returns to a previous refrain. (You may remember doing this kind of thing with poetry in your English class.)

**thematic content (in music):** once again, this deals with the central issues or themes, the overall message being expressed or conveyed, the thoughts or feelings that the music brings to your mind.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## Defining Genres in Music

**Directions:** Let's practice identifying the style, form, and content of a few genres in music. Working in groups, indicate what the genre, style, form, and content of the songs which will be played aloud for you. (We'll do the first one together as a class, and you'll do the second one with your group.)

<b>Song Title:</b> _____
What <b>genre</b> do you think this song belongs to? _____
What is the <b>artistic style</b> of this song and songs that belong to this genre? (What types of instruments are used in this genre? What is characteristic about the way it sounds, feels?) _____ _____
What is the <b>form of the melody</b> in this song? (i.e. ABA, ABAB, something else?) _____
What is the <b>thematic content</b> of this song? What is the song about? What does it make you think or feel? What issues does it deal with? Do other songs in this genre deal with those same issues? _____ _____

<b>Song Title:</b> _____
What <b>genre</b> do you think this song belongs to? _____
What is the <b>artistic style</b> of this song and songs that belong to this genre? (What types of instruments are used in this genre? What is characteristic about the way it sounds, feels?) _____ _____
What is the <b>form of the melody</b> in this song? (i.e. ABA, ABAB, something else?) _____
What is the <b>thematic content</b> of this song? What is the song about? What does it make you think or feel? What issues does it deal with? Do other songs in this genre deal with those same issues? _____ _____

## Defining Genres in Film

**Directions:** Now let's practice doing the same thing for a genre in film. Each group will be assigned a different genre in film. Your task is to define the style, form, and content of this genre by answering the following questions. Be as thorough as possible.

<b>Genre:</b>
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Name at least three movies that could be classified in this genre:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Artistic Style**

Describe the way a film in this genre typically looks. In what types of settings do these films take place? What types of costumes, props, or scenery can you expect to see? Is there anything about the lighting in the film that tells you it belongs to this genre (i.e. dark or light)?

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### **Narrative Form**

Describe a typical storyline of a film in this genre from beginning to end. Also, are there any types of characters that seem to reappear again and again in these types of films?

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### **Thematic Content**

What issues, problems, or concerns do you think this genre typically addresses? What are some of the overall messages or themes which are explored in these films? (There is no wrong answer here.)

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